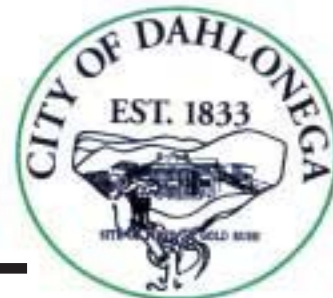


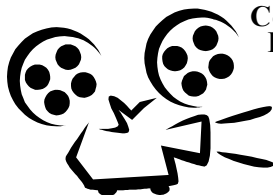
# City Limits

News from the Government Offices of Dahlonega, Georgia



Vol.2, No. 5

December 2006



## Council Sees Big Picture at Retreat

It wasn't exactly the silver screen, but Dahlonega City Council

members did have a chance to see the big picture of their city's government in November. The mayor, council members and city manager Bill Lewis had front row seats at the council's third annual retreat at Cohutta Lodge in Chatsworth. With the help of a facilitator—and otherwise completely cleared calendars—they reviewed their progress on meeting previously set objectives and identified areas in need of work in 2007. Out of numerous items on a broad brush list, they eventually narrowed their focus down to these five major items for action in 2007:

- Beginning in the areas of zoning and development, revise and update all ordinances to bring them more in line with modern day "best practices" and regulations. Some are 15-20 years old. Measures also will be put into place to keep ordinances up to date.
- Continue staff development and training program. Explore new opportunities for professional development in existing staff.

## Lutz or Klutz? New Spin on Dahlonega Christmas

Whether you're an old pro or a wobbly first-timer, you'll never think of Old Fashioned Christmas in Dahlonega the same way once you've laced up a pair of skates and hit the ice (pardon the pun) at Hancock Park. And that's just what the Dahlonega-Lumpkin County Chamber of Commerce had in mind in organizing the project. The chamber brought in \$40,000 from more than 50 sponsors and signed up some 60 volunteers to help. The city of Dahlonega and the Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority also got behind the effort—the city by providing labor, in-kind services and other support, the DDA with a \$25,000 sponsorship—and the idea crystallized.



Conduct a pay and classification study to keep the city's pay scale competitive.

- Continue on course with the new water treatment plant. Spring 2009 completion date is projected.
- Complete a water and sewer rate and rate structure study to keep rates where they need to be in relation to operating and capital improvements costs.
- Begin the lengthy and very expensive task of developing a storm water master plan for the city. This will take several years to complete.

While these goals were identified by the council as being the top five areas of primary focus, the city also will work to accomplish many of the other objectives on the initial list.

"The planning retreats we've had for the past few years have helped the city be more productive and more efficient in the way we conduct business," says city manager Bill Lewis. "They give the council an opportunity to put everything on 'pause' for a short time to look at the big picture of where we are and where we need to go. The goals they identify not only provide good inspiration; they are a tremendous aide in giving direction to the city manager and staff."

The ice skating rink appears to be accomplishing several goals: providing a new way for local residents to enjoy downtown, giving visitors who support the city's tourism industry another reason to put Dahlonega on their holiday to-do list and receiving a blizzard of media coverage and promotion for the city that will still be around long after the last snowflake (if we get one) melts.

"This has turned out to be a really good community project," says chamber president Dale Steenbergen. "It's been neat to see what can be done when we all work together. And it gives people something to do that's special."

The skating rink will be open daily through Jan. 7. \$8 per person covers skate rental for three hours of skating. For details call 706-864-3711 or visit [www.dahlonega.org](http://www.dahlonega.org).

## Waterworks Progress

The city and engineering firm Jordan, Jones & Goulding are working hard to get the new water treatment plant and delivery system built as soon as possible so water capacity will be available as the city's growth continues. Some issues remain to be resolved before the Environmental Protection Division will issue a permit to withdraw water from the Yahoola Creek Reservoir. Once that permit is issued, the design phase of the project can begin. Voter approval in November of the county's 2008 one-cent sales tax was good news for the project and the city, as it's projected to raise about \$4.3 million of the plant's cost.

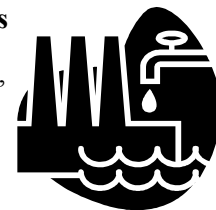
"I want to thank all the citizens who supported and voted for the SPLOST," says Dahlonega Mayor Gary McCullough. "It's very important to the well-being of our city and our community as a whole to have a good water supply for the future."

The money the city receives from the SPLOST will be more than a drop in the bucket. It will account for around one-fifth of the entire project when it's all said and done. The price tag for the entire water treatment plant project is \$22 million. That includes about \$13.5 million for the plant itself, plus the cost of a host of associated projects, from the 24-inch raw water intake to the pump to the water lines into and out of the plant. Also built in to the price is nearly \$4.5 million in contingency funds to cover unexpected costs bound to occur in a project of that size. City manager Bill Lewis says the city will be doing all it can to keep costs down. Using city crews where possible, for example, could save more than a million dollars.

Aside from being prepared to meet the city's water needs, there's another good reason to get the water treatment plant built as soon as possible. Rising costs of fuel and materials like steel and concrete have already impacted project costs and it's a pretty sure bet that building the plant won't get any cheaper as time goes by.

## Holiday Notes

Dahlonega City Hall and government departments will be closed Monday and Tuesday, Dec. 25 and 26 and Monday, Jan. 1 for the holidays. This year, the holiday closings will not interfere with regular garbage pick-up services. No changes in the schedule are planned.



# City of Dahlonega . . . continued from reverse side

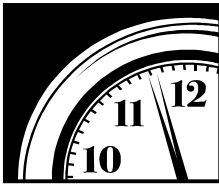


## The Inside Story

Contractors have been hammering away at renovations inside Dahlonega's cramped City Hall quarters, and chances of having the job finished by year-end were excellent at press time. The new floor plan features a wall-to-wall counter that separates the open lobby area, council chambers and restrooms at one end of the building from the administrative offices at the other end. Visitors will enter from the lobby side of the building, and go to the counter to conduct their business, call on staff members or be announced for appointments. Together with a modular building connected to the office end of the main building that will house several offices and a conference area, the new design will increase work space, provide more professional customer service and improve building security. The changes are intended to address these concerns for at least five years, until a new city hall building can be built.

## Services Expanded with Creative Scheduling

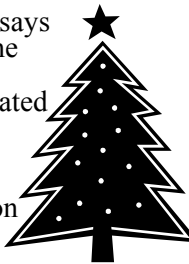
The newest member of the city's staff, Stacy Jarrard starts work every morning as a building inspector and leaves every afternoon as a marshal. The creative arrangement combining two part-time jobs has allowed the city to beef up service in both areas, at the cost of a single extra employee. Jarrard signed on in November, bringing with him a 16 year Lumpkin County law enforcement history. His previous roles as a School Resource Officer at Lumpkin County Middle School and DARE drug awareness program teacher have earned him trust and respect in the community, among the qualities city manager Bill Lewis had outlined in the job—make that



jobs—description. Jarrard already has some home construction experience and is working toward building inspector certification status. As a building inspector, he sees that builders' and contractors' projects meet minimum standard building codes needed to protect people and property. As a marshal in the afternoons, Jarrard, a sworn officer, keeps a security presence, mostly downtown, responds to merchants' concerns and addresses traffic control, parking and other issues that arise. Merchants seem enjoy the consistent law enforcement presence on weekday afternoons, and the city still plans to contract with the Lumpkin County Sheriff's Office for additional downtown coverage on weekends.

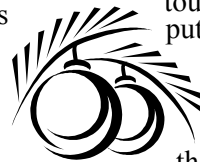
## City's Skipper: "Bring One for Chipper"

Public Works superintendent Skipper Bryant says the city will participate this year as usual in the *Bring One for the Chipper* Christmas tree recycling event, a statewide program coordinated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and Keep Georgia Beautiful, with support from sponsors. Residents who bring their Christmas trees to the city's shop area on Jan. 6 will receive free tree seedlings from the Georgia Forestry Service for their trouble, while supplies last. The trees will be chipped, and the mulch will be used for ground cover in the city's public areas and offered to residents free of charge for use in their gardens. City residents do have the option to leave their Christmas trees at the curb for pickup by the city, and those trees also will be mulched and recycled. The benefit of strong participation in the One for the Chipper program in Dahlonega is keeping as many of those holiday "leftovers" off the curbsides as possible so the city streets will stay tidy and pretty. Whether you bring your tree in or place it at the curb for pickup, please be sure to remove any nails and all decorations. For details call City Hall at 706-864-6133.



## Season's Greetings from Mayor, City Council

"Our town looks wonderful," Dahlonega Mayor Gary McCullough observed with satisfaction recently as the final



touches were put on the city's Christmas face. "On behalf of the City Council and the city staff, I'd like to thank all the volunteers who support the city in our festivals and special events held throughout the year. I'd like to thank the merchants, the Chamber of Commerce and all the people who help them bring all these events together so well. And to all the Old Fashioned Christmas volunteers who have given tremendously of their time, energy and financial resources to decorate our historic downtown so beautifully for this holiday season: We wish you a very Merry Christmas." Mayor McCullough also expressed appreciation for the city staff. "In every area of service they provide, in every job they do, they do an excellent job for us. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all," he said. The city's annual Christmas Family Supper was held in early December, and holiday greetings will be exchanged in person at an employee luncheon to be held Friday, Dec. 22 at City Hall.

## How May We Be of Service ?



Question? Comment? Problem? Call City Hall at (706) 864-6133. We'll put you in touch with the right person.

## City Council

Gary McCullough, Mayor  
Michael Clemons  
Guy Laboa  
Gerald Lord  
Sam Norton  
Terry Peters  
Bill Scott

Bill Lewis, City Manager

## Please join us at our meetings!

Learn about your government by attending public meetings like these. Find the complete schedule at [www.cityofdahlonega.com](http://www.cityofdahlonega.com).

**City Council:** 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

**Planning/Zoning Commission:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month at 7pm—City Hall

## Historic Preservation

**Commission:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of each month at 6pm—City Hall

## Dahlonega Downtown Development Authority:

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays alternately at City Hall or Chamber of Commerce building (December at Chamber of Commerce building).

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